

---

Student Work

---

10-1-2001

## A comparative study of leadership behaviors of principals from high and low socio-economic elementary public schools in Nebraska

Marilou Niemeyer  
*University of Nebraska at Omaha*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/studentwork>

 Part of the [Education Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Niemeyer, Marilou, "A comparative study of leadership behaviors of principals from high and low socio-economic elementary public schools in Nebraska" (2001). *Student Work*. 3404.

<https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/studentwork/3404>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student Work by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UNO. For more information, please contact [unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu](mailto:unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu).



## **INFORMATION TO USERS**

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

**The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.** Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

ProQuest Information and Learning  
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA  
800-521-0600

**UMI<sup>®</sup>**



A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS OF  
PRINCIPALS FROM  
HIGH AND LOW SOCIO-ECONOMIC  
ELEMENTARY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
IN NEBRASKA

by  
Marilou Niemeyer

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of  
The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska  
In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements  
For the Degree of Doctor of Education

Major: Educational Administration  
Under the supervision of Dr. Jack McKay

Omaha, Nebraska

October, 2001

UMI Number: 3032128

Copyright 2002 by  
Niemeyer, Marilou

All rights reserved.

UMI<sup>®</sup>

---

UMI Microform 3032128

Copyright 2002 by Bell & Howell Information and Learning Company.

All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against  
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

---

Bell & Howell Information and Learning Company  
300 North Zeeb Road  
P.O. Box 1346  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

DISSERTATION TITLE

A Comparative Study of Leadership Behaviors of Principals from High  
and Low Socio-Economic Elementary Public Schools in Nebraska

BY

MARILOU NIEMEYER

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

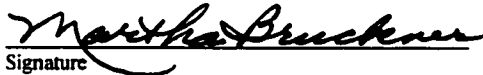
APPROVED

DATE

  
Signature

11-7-01  
Date

Dr. Jack McKay, Chair  
Typed Name

  
Signature

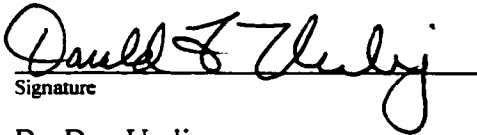
11-7-01  
Date

Dr. Martha Bruckner  
Typed Name

  
Signature

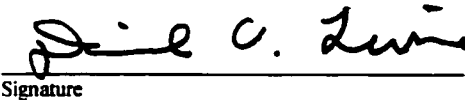
11-7-01  
Date

Dr. Neal Grandgenett  
Typed Name

  
Signature

11/8/01  
Date

Dr. Don Uerling  
Typed Name

  
Signature

11/8/01  
Date

Dr. Dan Levine  
Typed Name



University of Nebraska at Omaha  
Graduate College

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS OF  
PRINCIPALS FROM  
HIGH AND LOW SOCIO-ECONOMIC  
ELEMENTARY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
IN NEBRASKA

Marilou Niemeyer

University of Nebraska at Omaha, 2001

Advisor: Dr. Jack McKay

This study examined the differences, if any, between leadership behaviors of elementary principals from low and high socio-economic schools as defined by the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch schedule. A total of 80 principals with at least one year of experience were asked to participate in this study, a sampling of 40 principals from high socio-economic schools in Nebraska and a sampling of 40 principals from low socio-economic schools in Nebraska as measured by the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program.

Of the 80 principals who were contacted, 77 agreed to participate, and a total of 71 completed and returned the Leadership Practices Inventory. Of the 71, 37 were from the low socio-economic group and 34 were from the high socio-economic group. This represents 92% of the total number of principals who agreed to participate.

A t-test was used to analyze each of the five leadership practices, (1) challenging the process, (2) inspiring a

shared vision, (3) enabling others to act, (4) modeling the way, and (5) encouraging the heart. Each t-test resulted in showing no statistically significant difference in the mean scores of principals from high socio-economic schools as compared with the mean scores of principals from low socio-economic elementary schools.

Additional examination of the results of this study, especially in regard to effect sizes, indicates that further research and a larger sample size may be worth pursuing. Two practices, challenging the process and inspiring a shared vision, had effect sizes of .4, which are approaching "medium", which indicate that the low socio-economic group generally had higher mean scores than the high socio-economic group. Two other practices, modeling the way and encouraging the heart, had effect sizes of .3, which are small-to-medium, which also indicate that the low socio-economic group had higher mean scores than the higher socio-economic group. One practice, enabling others to act, had a less-than-small effect size of .1.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to so many individuals for their contributions to my doctoral studies. First, I would like to express my deepest thanks to Dr. Jack McKay and Dr. Dan Levine, whose encouragement, guidance, and expertise have been most valuable. I would also like to thank the members of my committee, Dr. Martha Bruckner, Dr. Neal Grandgenett, and Dr. Don Uerling, who have shared their invaluable insight with me in order to complete this project.

I would like to express a special thanks to Ellie Hites, who originally inspired me to go after my dream. Deepest appreciation also goes to Pat Minard, who has demonstrated real friendship through her never ending support and encouragement. I am also grateful to those who have been my "sideline cheering squad". They are Dr. Marvin Knittel, Vickie Bradley, Kit Raasch, Terry Quick, Dorothy and Tom Lanning, Susan and Al Julius, Nancy and Lee Branham, Sandra Sindt, David Minard, Del and Carolyn Roper, Dr. Marcellina Anderson, the Nebraska Faith At Work Team members, my PEO Sisters and many others.

Most of all, I must thank my family for their faithfulness, patience and love. My children, Chad Greene and Mari Heather Greene Geise, have given their constant, loving support and gracious, unselfish understanding throughout my many years of education. They have brought great pride and joy to my life and I hope, through this

accomplishment, I will do the same for them. My appreciation also goes to my mother, Bertha Niemeyer, and my sister, Jeri Niemeyer, who have never wavered in their belief in my capabilities.

Each of these people have endured with me through the long task of completing this doctoral program. They have laughed with me, cried with me, sacrificed for me, listened to me, applauded me and enthusiastically shared in this journey and I am so grateful for each one of them. My greatest joy is their recognition and pride in this achievement.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	vi
List of Tables	viii
Introduction	1
Need and Purpose of the Study	3
Research Questions	4
Focus of the Study	4
Definition of Terms	5
Organization of the Study	6
Review of the Literature	8
Leadership Theories	8
Leadership Characteristics and Behaviors	19
Leadership Characteristics and the School Principal	20
Leadership Behavior and the LPI	27
Leadership Practices Inventory	42
Research on the LPI and Elementary Principals	45
Summary	46
Research Design and Methodology	48
Overview	48
Description of Subjects	48
Description of the Instrument	50
Leadership Practices Inventory	50
Data Collection and Results	51
Limitations of the Study	53
Summary	54

Results	57
Overview	57
Need and Purpose for the Study	57
Subjects and Return Rate	57
Statistical Analysis	59
Table 1	62
Research Question	64
Summary	64
Conclusions	66
Research Question	66
Methodology	66
Results Summary	67
Discussion of the Findings	68
Implications for Research	71
Implications for Practice	72
References	73
Appendix	
A. Leadership Practices Inventory (Self)	78
B. Institutional Review Board Approval Letter	83
C. Cover Letter to Principals	85
D. A Sampling of 40 High Socio-Economic Schools and their Percent of Free and Reduced Lunches	87
E. A Sampling of 40 Low Socio-Economic Schools and their Percent of Free and Reduced Lunches	89

## List of Tables

Table 1 - T-test results of Leadership Behaviors of Elementary School Principals from High Socio-Economic Schools as Compared with those Principals from Low Socio-Economic Elementary Schools as Defined by the Dimensions of the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Roger R. Pearman (1998) wrote, "Leadership today faces a profound paradigm shift. It is no longer the exclusive domain of the senior executive. Today's leader must know how to support and develop the intelligence around him or her in a dynamic, systems-oriented way" (p.1). This definition of leadership proposes a variation, a change in which leadership needs to go beyond management to a more personal involvement of the leader with his/her employees and the organization. It also implies that leadership may be a learned set of specific behaviors, skills or practices. This suggestion is both exciting and challenging! If there are specific practices or behaviors that affect the quality of leadership and they can be learned, it would indicate that anyone, not just those with special traits, powers, insight or prestige, is capable of developing effective leadership skills.

Kouzes & Posner believe this to be true. They asked hundreds of managers to describe their "personal best" experiences in which "they got something extraordinary accomplished in an organization" (Kouzes & Posner, 1987, p. 309). From these initial interviews and questions, they developed a personal best survey containing 38 open-ended questions which required about 1 to 2 hours of reflection and expression. About 550 surveys of these were collected as well as a shortened form completed by an additional 780 managers. In addition, 42 in-depth interviews were

conducted, taking from a minimum of 45 to 60 minutes up to 4 or 5 hours. The various case studies (from surveys and interview notes) were independently content analyzed by two outside raters, and it was determined that a fundamental pattern of leadership behaviors emerged when people are accomplishing extraordinary things in organizations (Kouzes & Posner, 1987).

The Leadership Practices Inventory is the instrument that was developed by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner in response to managers describing their "personal best" experiences. This instrument "offers a set of leadership practices that are based on the real-world experiences of hundreds of ordinary people who have answered the cry for leadership" (Kouzes & Posner, 1987, p. xvii). Five practices were identified to be common to extraordinary leadership achievements. These five practices are (1) challenging the process, (2) inspiring a shared vision, (3) enabling others to act, (4) modeling the way, and (5) encouraging the heart. "These practices are not the private property of the leaders we studied. They are available to anyone who wants to accept the leadership challenge" (Kouzes & Posner, 1987, p. 8). Kouzes & Posner believe that leadership is a learned skill. Their studies of hundreds of executives, managers and leaders from diverse organizations who have achieved extraordinary accomplishments led them to understand that all of these people "convinced others to join them on pioneering journeys" (Kouzes & Posner, 1987, p. 7).

All of these leaders followed a three-phase strategy which Kouzes & Posner termed "the VIP-vision-involvement-persistence-model of leadership" (Kouzes & Posner, 1987, p. 7).

The first strategy was that of creating a vision. These leaders were able to imagine a new and better possibility for their organization. They were able to create a vision for the organization and they were able to convince others within the organization of the significance of their vision.

The second strategy was that of involving others. They enlisted others within the organization to use their skills, talents and gifts to help achieve the vision. "The involvement of many others is the key to making it . . ." (Kouzes & Posner, 1987, p. 7).

The last strategy was to persist until the vision was accomplished. This strategy requires perseverance and endurance. It is an insistence that the task be completed, no matter what! Despite setbacks or delays, good leaders pressed forward, with the help of others, to realize the goal.

#### Need and Purpose for the Study

Principals are a primary force within a school. They set the climate of the school, and they are the most highly visible instructional leaders of the school. Principals provide the leadership that most determines the failure or success of a school; therefore, it is important to investigate the specific leadership practices and behaviors



of school principals.

The researcher was curious to find if there were differences in leadership behaviors of principals from low and high socio-economic schools because little literature was found that addressed this particular area of interest.

The purpose of this study was to discover whether or not there are differences between leadership practices, as measured by the Leadership Practices Inventory, of principals of high socio-economic elementary schools and principals of low socio-economic elementary schools, as measured by the federal free lunch schedule, in the state of Nebraska.

#### Research Question

The purpose of this study was to address the following question:

Is there a statistically significant difference between leadership behaviors of those principals from high socio-economic elementary schools as compared with those principals from low socio-economic elementary schools as defined by the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)?

This was answered by doing five t-tests using the Leadership Practices Inventory mean scores for the two groups using the five practices: (1) challenging the process, (2) inspiring a shared vision, (3) enabling others to act, (4) modeling the way, and (5) encouraging the heart.

#### Focus of the Study

An extensive amount of research has been conducted about leadership practices and behaviors both inside and outside

the educational field. It is clear from this research that specific leadership practices and behaviors are necessary for successful organizations to thrive. Just as it is necessary for administrators and supervisors of corporations and organizations to know and use good leadership skills, it is also important for principals to develop these same skills in order to lead good schools.

The Leadership Practices Inventory by Kouzes & Posner was chosen as the foundational instrument of this proposed study because it assesses specific leadership practices and behaviors that have been found to be valuable. This study examined whether or not there are differences between leadership practices, as measured by the Leadership Practices Inventory, of principals of high socio-economic elementary public schools and principals of low socio-economic elementary public schools in Nebraska, as defined by the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch schedule.

#### Definition of Terms

\* LPI: The Leadership Practices Inventory developed by Kouzes & Posner (1987). The LPI Self form (also known as the LPI-SELF) is comprised of thirty statements - six statements for measuring each of the five leadership practices. Those five leadership practices are: (1) challenging the process, (2) inspiring a shared vision, (3) enabling others to act, (4) modeling the way, and (5) encouraging the heart (Kouzes & Posner, 1987).

\* Elementary school: defined as a school serving Pre-

Kindergarten or Kindergarten through Fourth, Fifth or Sixth Grades. In order to be used in this study, the school needed to have 6 teachers or more.

- \* Free and Reduced Lunch Schedule: A Federal program designed to designate families whose income falls at or below a certain guideline decided by the federal government.

- \* High socio-economic schools: A sampling of 40 schools from the list of elementary public schools who have disclosed the least number of families who qualified for free or reduced lunches to the Nebraska State Department of Education.

- \* Low socio-economic schools: A sampling of 40 schools from the list of elementary schools who have disclosed the most number of families who qualified for free or reduced lunches to the Nebraska State Department of Education.

#### Organization of the Study

The first chapter of this study is an introduction to the study including the focus and purpose of the study, the definition of terms and the organization of the study.

The second chapter of this study reviews the literature which focuses upon four specific types of leadership theories. They are: trait theory, behavior theory, contingency theory and transformational theory. It also includes leadership characteristics and behaviors, as well as leadership characteristics and the school principal. The chapter concludes with leadership behavior and the LPI.

The third chapter of this study describes the design and methodology of this study including a description of the

subjects, the instrumentation used, the method for data collection, and the limitations of the study.

The fourth chapter of this study describes the results of the study.

The fifth chapter of this study provides a conclusion of the study with implications for further research and practice.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Overview

This chapter will discuss four types of leadership theories. They are: trait theory, behavior theory, contingency theory and transformational theory. Low and high socio-economics schools may indicate certain needs that require diverse leadership behaviors. This chapter will discuss theories that could possibly meet the challenges of each socio-economic group.

#### Leadership Theories

Leadership theories can be classified into four major categories: the trait (personality) approach, the behavior theory, the contingency theory and the transformational theory. The following section will briefly discuss some important aspects and a general overview of each of the four types of theories.

Trait Theory. Trait theory is the belief that a leader possesses distinct personal qualities/attributes that distinguish him or her from his or her followers and that these personal qualities/attributes should be possible to identify. The traits of identified leaders are depicted as involving remarkable physical, mental, and psychological characteristics. Two questions were important to this theory: What are the traits/qualities/attributes that comprise a good leader? And to what extent are those traits/qualities/attributes different from their followers?

L.L. Bernard (1926) believed that there were seven broad categories that could describe good leadership traits. His description of them is: "the possession of a striking physical personality, the ability to communicate by the written word, an attitude of sympathy and understanding, honesty and faithful devotion to their cause, insight, and courage and persistence, and lastly moral-social and moral-psycho qualities" (p. 531).

Ordway Tead (1959) understood there to be five good administrative qualities to good leadership. Tead (1959) identified them to be:

- (1) sheer physical and nervous vitality and drive,
- (2) the ability to think logically, rationally, with problem-solving skill that "gets the point" more quickly than average,
- (3) the willingness to take the burdens of responsibility for executive decisions and actions,
- (4) the ability to get along with people in a sincerely friendly, affable, yet firm way, and
- (5) the ability to communicate by voice and pen in effective ways (p. 59).

C. Bird analyzed 20 studies in which 79 traits were considered to be important (as cited in Stogdill, 1974). It is clear from just these few researchers' findings that there is a noticeable number of personality traits or characteristics that have been identified. It is also

important to be aware of what Ralph M. Stogdill discovered as he tried to compile these traits/qualities/attributes into some semblance of order.

Stogdill did a comprehensive collection of research in both 1948 and again in 1970 in which he examined over 163 empirical trait-related studies and concluded that the characteristics that most predominately appeared were: "alertness, originality, personal integrity, and self-confidence" (Stogdill, 1974, p.79).

Behavior Theory. Researchers, becoming disillusioned with the traits/qualities/attributes theory, eventually shifted their focus of study to a leader's behavior(s) as opposed to his or her personal characteristics. Over a period of time, researchers developed numerous theories and studies on the effectiveness of the leader's behavior and his or her leadership style.

Although behavior theory was first scientifically established as early as 1929 when two scientists, Aaronovich and Khotin tried to alter the leadership behavior of monkeys, it was not until the late 1970's that this theory really became popular. Disagreements about specific behaviors have occurred among various researchers, with much interest centered upon reinforcement and punishment behaviors (Bass, 1990).

Two major research projects investigating leaders' behaviors were initiated at about the same time (Steers, Porter & Bigley, 1996). One was a research effort conducted

at Ohio State University under the direction of Stogdill, Fleishman, Hemphill, and associates. The other was a program undertaken at the University of Michigan by Likert and his colleagues. Both projects resulted in similar conclusions - that leadership behaviors could be classified into two content categories. One category contained those behaviors that pertained to interpersonal relationships; the other category consisted of those behaviors that related to task completion.

It has also been concluded that both leader and follower are influenced by each other's behavior and both stimulate and reinforce the other's behavior to a certain extent (Steers, et al., 1996).

Contingency Theory. Contingency theory came out of the understanding that neither traits nor preferable behavior factors are sufficient to predict leadership success but rather that "the focus needs to be upon the best leadership style for a given situation" (Greenberg, 1996, p. 225). In recognition of this, researchers were led to focus upon situational influences.

The contingency model asserts that no one leadership style works in all circumstances. It emphasizes that time, place and circumstances are important when choosing a leadership style that will work appropriately in a given environment. Three separate theories are incorporated into the overall contingency theory. These three theories are House's path-goal theory, Fiedler's contingency model, and



Fiedler's cognitive resource theory.

House's path-goal theory focuses upon the behavior of the leader more than that of the follower.

The leader clarifies the goals for the followers, as well as the paths to those goals. This clarification enhances the psychological state of the followers and arouses them to increase their efforts to perform well. Thus the followers achieve satisfaction from the job to be done (Bass, 1990, p.46).

Situational variables also play an important role in this theory. Hoy & Miskel (1991) write: "Two types of situational variables are considered in the path-goal theory: (1) personal characteristics of subordinates as they strive to accomplish work goals and derive satisfaction and (2) environmental pressures and demands" (p. 271).

Fiedler and his associates developed one of the first major coherent contingency models. His model depended upon the leader's orientation, which basically is whether the leader is inclined to be relationship oriented or task oriented, and if the situation was favorably or unfavorably oriented regarding the orientation. Favorability is measured in terms of the leader-member relationship, the structure of the task and the power position of the leader (Bass, 1990). "Evidence indicates that the quality of leader-member relations is the most important factor in determining the leader's influence over the group members, followed by task

structure and positions power" (Fiedler, 1967, p. 32-34).

Cognitive resource theory is used to explain the underlying processes of the contingency theory (Fiedler, 1967). The original contingency theory was criticized because it did not explain the specific process that produced the success of the outcome. Therefore, the cognitive resource theory refers to:

the intellectual abilities, technical competence, and job-relevant knowledge acquired through formal training or experience in the organization. In its simplest formulation, cognitive resource theory maintains that in the best of all possible worlds, the leader's intellectual abilities or cognitive resources are the major source of the plans, decisions, and strategies that guide the group's actions. (Hoy & Miskel, 1991, p. 283).

Directive behavior on the part of the leader is most often the manner of communication to the followers in this type of theory.

Transformational Theory. Bernard M. Bass and his associates basically established this theory beginning in the early 1960's. It is considered the trend of today's theories and the most sought after in organizations that are serious about leadership and corporation success. In 1990, Joseph Rost wrote "Change is so rapid that the people living today are the first generation who can participate in a massive paradigm shift and know that they are going through it"

(p. 127). His concern at that time was for a new school of leadership "that articulates a postindustrial concept . . . " (p. 102). Rost (1990) writes "Real transformation involves active people, engaging in influence relationships based on persuasion, intending real changes to happen, and insisting that those changes reflect their mutual purposes" (p. 123). His belief is that all four of these elements must be present for transformational leadership to occur.

"Transformational leadership is a paradigm shift in the way in which we understand leadership and leadership challenges and processes" (Pearman, 1998, p. 6). It is the ability of an individual to take a leadership role that has been traditionally described in one way and uniquely modify it in ways that will satisfy not only the company's needs but also the needs of its employees. The premise of this theory is that "leaders develop in their subordinates an expectation of high performance rather than merely spending time praising or reprimanding them" (Bass, 1990, p. 54). In order to achieve this expectation, a leader must become "a developer of people and a builder of teams" (Bass, 1990, p. 54). A good transformational leader has developed skills of charisma, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. This theory embraces both the emotional attributes as well as the rational aspects of subordinates.

James MacGregor Burns (1978) writes this about transformational leadership. "Such leadership occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality" (p. 20). His belief is that instead of power being only with the leader, it is mutually distributed between the two; however, he is clear about how the leader functions differently from the follower. He writes:

Leaders and followers may be inseparable in function, but they are not the same. The leader takes the initiative in making the leader-led connection; it is the leader who created the links that allow communication and exchange to take place. . . leaders address themselves to followers' wants, needs, and other motivations, as well as to their own, and thus they serve as an independent force in changing the makeup of the followers' motive base through gratifying their motives.  
(Burns, 1978, p.20)

Very little empirical evidence exists to help evaluate the transformational leadership model adequately because of its relative newness.

The theory of transformational leadership seems to have been developed through two very evident changes: the work environment itself and the employees. Organizations today, out of necessity, have become more diverse, more competitive

and more flexible in their services.

Various descriptions of the causes of changes have been theorized, however, one of the best descriptions is given by John Kotter. Kotter (1990) describes some of the causes for these changes to the workforce as "a combination of faster technological change, greater international competition, market deregulation, overcapacity in capital-intensive industries, an unstable oil cartel, raiders with junk bonds, and a demographically changing workforce" (p.12). These tremendous challenges to the organizational structure call for an alternative type of leadership. The structure of the new organization demands an individual who will revolutionize the workplace into a vital, productive enterprise.

Not only is the work environment in a state of flux but so are the employees. Today more than ever before, enormous pressures also exist upon employees. Constant competition for good jobs and the acquisition of a good education for them are routine conditions of potential employees seeking favorable employment situations. Employees also balance more in their personal lives than ever before.

Elizabeth Jefferies outlines several personal factors that contribute to the stresses of the average employee: the challenge of child care, the challenge of competing and working with ethnic diversity, personal and family economic needs, the desires of individuals to work at meaningful jobs and the challenges that individuals face in their private lives. Jefferies (1996) says that "According to Dr. Herbert

Kravits and Julie Boden, 96% of Americans come from dysfunctional homes, experiencing either divorce, separation, disruptive chemical dependence, psychological disorders or abhorrent social behavior" (p. 9).

These challenges are representative of our society at large and need to be carefully considered and addressed when employing people and attempting to train them to be productive, satisfied members of an organization. These challenges call forth a leader that cannot only pioneer an organization to prosperity but can also motivate its employees to focus on the tasks that face them as productive members of the workforce in an organization.

The combination of the changing organization and the challenging workforce leads to the understanding that old management techniques will no longer be sufficient to enable success for either entities in the future. Bennis and Townsend (1995) believe that "failing organizations almost always fail because they're overmanaged and underled" (p. 7). This strong belief comes out of their descriptive differences between managers and leaders.

Leaders are innovators, while managers are administrators; leaders are original while managers copy; leaders develop while managers maintain; leaders focus on people while managers focus on systems and structures; leaders inspire trust while managers rely on control; leaders have long-term vision while managers have a short-term views;

leaders ask what and why while managers ask why and how; and lastly, leaders have their eyes on the horizon while managers have their eyes on the bottom line. (Bennis & Townsend, 1995, p. 6-7)

It is clear that there is a distinction between managers and leaders. John Gardner also believes this. Gardner (1990) articulates these differences very succinctly by saying:

Leaders and leaders/managers distinguish themselves from the general run of managers in at least six respects:

1. Leaders think in longer terms.
2. Leaders grasp the relationship of larger realities.
3. Leaders reach and influence constituents beyond their jurisdictions.
4. Leaders put heavy emphasis on the intangibles of vision, values, and motivation and understand intuitively the nonrational and unconscious elements in leader-constituent interaction.
5. Leaders have political skill.
6. Leaders think in terms of renewal and revisions . . . The manager is more tightly linked to an organization than is the leader. Indeed, the leader may have no organization at all. (Gardner, 1990, p. 4).

Today, both employers and employees are looking for individuals in leadership roles to transform the workplace

into active, high performing organizations that are committed to enabling the collective group and their employees to succeed.

### Leadership Characteristics and Behaviors

Descriptions of leadership are abundant. Most are average but not outstanding or inclusive. John Gardner's is both. Gardner (1990) wrote: "Leadership is the process of persuasion or example by which an individual (or leadership team) induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers" (p. 1). This definition of leadership sums up a common belief that a leader is one who is responsible for challenging, encouraging, motivating, and modeling others toward a shared goal with specific behaviors that favor success. No less is expected from the leadership of school administrators.

Joseph Rost (1990) also has a definition and outline for leadership that is quite inclusive. His is: "Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes" (p. 102). Rost believes that leadership needs to begin with a mutual relationship based on shared respect and knowledge of one another's feelings. It is important to recognize and acknowledge the contributions each person has made to the organization. His definition of leadership encourages a mutual and agreed upon standard to be met. The sharing of a vision of change is vital as well as strategies and steps to accomplish the vision. Finally, collaboration needs to be of



the highest priority in order for real leadership to occur.

Warren Bennis (1989) says this about a leader and their attributes:

Ultimately, a leader's ability to galvanize his co-workers resides both in his understanding of himself and in his understanding of his co-workers' needs and wants, along with his understanding of . . . their mission. In such leaders, competence, vision, and virtue exists in nearly perfect balance. Competence, or knowledge, without vision and virtue, breeds technocrats. Virtue, without vision and knowledge, breeds ideologues, Vision, without virtue and knowledge, breeds demagogues. (Bennis, 1989, p. 163)

The essential qualities that Bennis uses to describe a leader are (1) a person who knows him/herself well and has the ability to set an example for others to follow, (2) a person who strengthens his co-workers by listening to their needs and wants and responds appropriately, (3) a person who is willing to involve his/her co-workers in the organization by creating an atmosphere of trust and reliability, (4) a person who is able to takes risks because he/she is self-knowledgable and trusts the process to work, and (5) a person who is able to create a shared direction for the organization and help others move toward their common goal.

#### Leadership Characteristics and the School Principal

How do the qualities of being a leader and the skills and behaviors of leadership fit together to create an

academic environment in which learning is the primary goal? The answer is the school principal. The school principal is the "key" to the success of the shared objective.

In a very real sense the principal is the "person on the line" charged with a myriad of responsibilities in a position to significantly affect the learning of young people. . . What is required is well-trained, intelligent, and humane individuals who have in their repertoire the necessary human, conceptual, and technical skills to lead groups of professionals and clients into rich educational adventures.

(Hughes & Ubben, 1978, p. xv).

The school workplace is a setting in which an administrator is expected to demonstrate leadership behaviors that facilitate the goal of educating children for their future. In doing so, the school administrator effectively creates an environment for children, parents, staff and the community that supports and promotes appropriate educational opportunities. This part of the literature review will discuss some descriptive leadership characteristics and behaviors which have been found to be important in a school administrator.

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) (1991) found that:

In the exercise of leadership, the proficient principal:

1. Exercises vision and provides leadership that

appropriately involves staff, parents, students, and the community in the identification and accomplishment of the school's mission . . .

2. Recognizes the individual needs of all staff and students, including those who are at risk because of diverse cultures, backgrounds, or abilities . . .
3. Applies effective human relations skills . . .
4. Encourages and develops the leadership of others. . .
5. Analyzes relevant information, makes decision, delegates responsibility, and provides appropriate support and follow-up . . .
6. Identifies and creatively coordinates the use of available human, material, and financial resources to achieve the school's mission and goals . . .
7. Explores, assesses, develops, and implements educational concepts that enhance teaching and learning . . .
8. Bonds the school community through shared values and beliefs . . .
9. Initiates and manages constructive change . . .
10. Advances the profession through participation as a member of local, state, and national professional groups. (p. 6)

The Elementary Principal's Handbook (1978) suggests skills that involve human relations and leadership which relate directly to specific behaviors on the part of the principal which effect the productivity and success of the

overall school.

The handbook indicates that there are two dimensions of the modern principal. The first dimension identified:

has to do with effectively managing the enterprise.

It is composed of those activities concerned with procuring, coordinating, and deploying the material and personnel needed to accomplish the goals of the school. The other dimension is somewhat more difficult to define but can be summed up in one word: Leadership. This is a dimension of quality. It is distinguished by the ways a principal uses himself/herself to create a school climate characterized by staff productivity, creative thought, and efficient and effective movement toward the goals of the school organization. (Hughes & Ubben, 1978, p. 2)

Leadership is comprised of several strategies and behaviors which promote the success of an intended goal. It is a process that "begins where followers are and moves them toward more participative forms of leadership behaviors" (Callison & McAllister, 1999, p. 4). Several key concepts [of leadership] that Callison & McAllister (1999) found include the following:

1. knowing the dimensions of leadership
2. providing purpose and direction
3. improving school culture
4. developing a relevant school vision
5. setting priorities and goals" (p. 3).

The National Association of Elementary School Principal's assessment center looked for leadership of principals in 12 dimensions. They are:

1. Instructional leadership and supervision
2. Human relations
3. Judgment
4. Organizational ability
5. Educational values
6. Oral communication
7. Written communication
8. Problem analysis
9. Creativity
10. Decisiveness
11. Group leadership
12. Resourcefulness

Why are some principals more effective than others in running a good school? In an article written by Caroline Hodges Persell and Peter W. Cookson, Jr. (1982) which was compiled in the Hot Topic Series for Phi Delta Kappa, they addressed this question. They reviewed more than 75 research studies and reports and were able to identify nine recurrent behaviors that good principals displayed. Those behaviors were:

1. Demonstrating a commitment of high expectations.

Good principals had a clear vision of their long-term goals for their schools, including strong achievement goals. . . In such schools, principals

served as hard-working and fair-minded role models who expected of their teachers only what they were willing to give themselves. (p. 17)

2. Creating a climate of high expectations.

When principals held teachers responsible for pupil learning, the teachers were more likely to "assume responsibility for teaching basic reading and math skills and are much more committed to to doing so" than were the staffs of declining schools, who felt that there was not much that teachers could do to influence the achievement of their students.  
(p. 18)

3. Functioning as an instructional leader.

Fullan writes "More effective principals appear to become directly involved in instructional policy by sitting down and meeting with their teachers" (cited in Hodges Persell & Cookson, Jr, 1982, p. 18).

4. Being a forceful and dynamic leader.

"Successful principals welcome new ideas, have high tolerance for ambiguity, are analytical, and adopt a practical stance toward life"(p.19).

5. Consulting effectively with others.

"Exemplary principals make their intentions clear but they also consult with teachers about those intentions. Effective principals are responsive to

teacher and student input regarding school policy"  
(p. 19).

6. Creating order and discipline.

"Good principals serve as facilitators of other people's actions (such as teachers') either by minimizing factors that may disrupt the learning process or by obtaining support and materials"  
(p.20).

7. Marshaling resources.

Edmonds writes "When necessary, school energy and resources (in effective schools) can be diverted to further the central objective of pupils acquiring basic schools skills" (cited in Hodges Persell & Cookson, Jr., 1982, p.18).

8. Using time well.

These findings suggest that the amount of time principals spend in a school, how they spend their time while they are at school, and what they are doing when they are not in the school may all play a role in how principals influence their schools.  
(p. 22)

9. Evaluating results.

"In more effective schools, principals did not simply hold clear goals for student achievement, they evaluated student progress on those goals" (cited in Hodges Persell & Cookson, Jr., 1982, p.22).

### Leadership Behavior and the LPI

It is clear from the previous research that there is a wide understanding and belief of the constitution of good leadership. Study after study has identified specific skills, values, and areas of knowledge and understanding that seem to distinguish principals of effective schools. It is reasonable to assume that to a large degree, such knowledge, understanding, skills, and values can be passed along in principal preparation programs" (NAESP, 1990)

It appears from much of the previous literature that there are numerous leadership behaviors that can be learned that would indicate when a principal is on a successful path to school administration. Several important leadership behaviors that were consistently found in the literature were: the ability to collaborate with others toward a common goal [appropriate education of children], the ability to create and accomplish a common vision, the ability to develop and exemplify high expectations, the ability to use time and resources well and the ability to enhance the learning process through the recognition of proficient individual contributions.

The Leadership Practices Inventory is an instrument that defines five fundamental practices that empower those in authority to produce extraordinary results. The five practices are (1) challenging the process, (2) inspiring a shared vision, (3) enabling others to act, (4) modeling the way, and (5) encouraging the heart.



This part of the literature review will support findings that these five practices are highly valued skills that effective leaders possess.

Challenging the Process. Leaders who challenge the process as defined by Kouzes and Posner (1997)

...search for opportunities to change the status quo. They look for innovative ways to improve the organization. In doing so, they experiment and take risks. And because leaders know that risk taking involves mistakes and failures, they accept the inevitable disappointments as learning opportunities. (p. 9)

Robert Kriegel and Louis Patler (1991) have several ideas about the process of continuing to grow and taking risks. They call their beliefs "unconventional wisdom" and have several quotes that apply to not staying with the status quo but looking toward the future. The unconventional wisdom quotes that fit the category of Challenging the Process on Kouzes and Posners' Leadership Practices Inventory are: "If you don't mess with success, someone else will" (p. 64), "Mess with success or your success will mess with you" (p. 69), "Treat your product as if it's alive and it will stay that way" (p. 69), "Focus on the process, not the goal" (p. 72), "Use success as a springboard, not as a pedestal" (p. 75), "The best time to change is when you don't have to" (p. 76), and lastly, "If it ain't broke, BREAK IT!" (p. 78).

It is clear from these unconventional wisdom quotes that

they strongly agree that leaving the status quo will only lead to eventual failure while ardently advising that even after success is achieved in an organization, it is vital to continue to grow and work toward a higher objective.

Also believing that good leaders practice challenging the status quo is Rosabeth Moss Kanter. She calls those types of leaders "quiet entrepreneurs". Kanter compared 115 innovations, as well as 234 managerial accomplishments, in a six-company study. The study revealed "There are almost twice as many well-regarded managers and professionals in any functional area carrying out innovative projects in firms characterized by integrative practices as in those exhibiting too much segmentalism" (Kanter, 1983, p. 211). She goes on to explain:

Though innovators are diverse people in diverse circumstance, they share an integrative mode of operating which produces innovation; seeing problems not within limited categories but in terms larger than received wisdom; they make new connections, both intellectual and organizational; and they work across boundaries, reaching beyond the limits of their own jobs-as-given. They are not rugged individualists-as in the classic stereotype of an entrepreneur-but good builders and users of teams, as even classic business creators have to be. And so they are aided in their quest for innovation by an integrative environment, in which ideas flow freely, resources are attainable rather

than locked in budgetary boxes, and support and teamwork across areas are the norm (Kanter, 1983, p. 212).

It takes courage for a person to examine the organization that he/she works in and decide to do something different within it. A sense of empowerment, enables change. Jaffe, Scott & Tobe (1994) write:

Empowerment means moving out of a reactive style of work and adopting a strategic focus to examine what you want to accomplish in your work. By doing this, you no longer see yourself as a helpless victim, waiting for the organization to tell you what to do. Just as your team and your company have a set of goals and a vision, you need one for yourself as well. Looking ahead toward your goals and vision, you define the steps to take toward them. From your own proposals, you negotiate and work with others to fit your personal vision and goals into the vision and goals of the organization. This alignment, a win-win orientation, is the essence of empowerment. (p. 64)

Empowerment gives one the ability to challenge the status quo and have the belief that individuals can make a difference. Leaders that provide opportunities, both for themselves and their employees, open possibilities for growth and success. Taking risks are uncomfortable, however, by doing so, one demonstrates a highly valued leadership quality.

"The responsibilities of exceptional leadership, which include communicating an inspiring vision and challenging people to exceed status quo limits, all require discretionary risk taking" (Calvert, 1993, p. 25). Discretionary is the optimal word here. This indicates that taking risks are not done indiscriminately, but rather with thought, consultation and deliberation. Challenging the process, as Kouzes and Posner have defined it, is a positive leadership characteristic that enhances the leader, an organization and it also encourages growth and success.

Inspiring a Shared Vision. Leaders who inspire a shared vision as defined by Kouzes and Posner (1997)

... passionately believe that they can make a difference. They envision the future, creating an ideal and unique image of what the organization can become. Through their magnetism and quiet persuasion, leaders enlist others in their dreams. They breathe life into their visions and get people to see exciting possibilities for the future. (p. 9)

The Road Less Traveled (Peck, 1978) is a prime example of a piece of literature that exemplifies a process that enables others to create a more positive image of themselves and others. In it, Peck describes how and why people believe as they do and it examines possibilities for change to improve one's life. It shares a positive vision for the future. The vision of becoming a whole, productive and happy person is the appealing characteristic of this book. It

nurtures a common desire for improvement and self-fulfilment.

A vision can be defined as a mental picture of the future. A mental picture of the future of an organization is mandatory for its healthy growth. "A vision articulates a view of a realistic, credible, attractive future for the organization, a condition that is better in some important ways than what now exists. A vision is a target that beckons" (Bennis & Nanus, 1985, p. 89). Creating a mental vision is a leadership characteristic that requires a knowing of what is important and an ability to describe a better possible future. This ability is invaluable in an organization as it provides a strategy in which the organization can move forward. Developing a shared vision for an organization leads to empowering employees, which enhances production. Bennis and Nanus (1985) say:

When the organization has a clear sense of its purpose, directions, and desired future state and when this image is widely shared, individuals are able to find their own roles both in the organization and in the larger society of which they are a part. This empowers individuals and confers status upon them because they can see themselves as a part of a worthwhile enterprise. (p. 91)

When individuals feel empowered, they bring vigor and enthusiasm to their work which in turn heightens productivity. Success, pride and satisfaction result from a more productive work environment. When a leader deliberately outlines a vision for an organization, he/she

develops unique possibilities for both the employee and the organization. Bennis and Nanus (1985) describe it like this:

By focusing attention on a vision, the leader operates on the emotional and spiritual resources of the organization, on its values, commitment, and aspirations . . . Great leaders often inspire their followers to high levels of achievement by showing them how their work contributes to worthwhile ends.

It is an emotional appeal to some of the most fundamental of human needs—the need to be important, to make a difference, to feel useful, to be a part of a successful and worthwhile enterprise. (p. 93)

Making a difference. It's the reason many people do their work well. It is the effective leader who is capable of making people feel needed, wanted and that they make a difference.

A vision creates freedom and possibilities. Shared visions create climates of maximum performance and enhanced productivity. Jeffries (1996) believes that vision doesn't just happen. It requires an "everyday consciousness...It is a journey" (p. 28). Dedicating oneself to constantly re-evaluating a vision is the responsibility of the leader. Re-evaluation is important in order to stay vibrant and thriving. Jeffries (1996) suggests that "Any time there is a significant event, a breakthrough, or even a challenge, is a good time to re-articulate the vision" (p. 30). Inspiring a shared vision is a skill that characterizes exceptional

leadership. It is a skill that must be learned and developed in order for an organization to grow and be productive.

Enabling Others to Act. Leaders who enable others to act as defined by Kouzes and Posner (1997)

... foster collaboration and build spirited teams. They actively involve others. Leaders understand that mutual respect is what sustains extraordinary effort; they strive to create an atmosphere of trust and human dignity. They strengthen others, making each person feel capable and powerful. (p. 9)

Expectations and roles have drastically changed from the workplace of yesterday. Followers are no longer defined as people who blindly go about their work without any input into the organization. Today, they are valued for not only what they do, but their commitment to continual improvement as well as their connection to others at their work.

Collaboration between workers and leaders is vital for a healthy organization. Wellins, Byham and Wilson (1991) write "Most organizations believe that a commitment to continuous improvement by all members is a must if their businesses are to remain competitive . . . An organization empowers its people when it enables employees to take on more responsibility and to make use of what they know and can learn" (p. 21-22). Empowerment seems to be an important factor when encouraging people to work cooperatively. Employees must feel that they have some authority over the events and circumstances of the organization.

Collaboration celebrates promotion. Promotion within the workplace is a theme that Jeffrey Pfeffer (1994) believes motivates employees. He writes:

It encourages training and skill development because the availability of promotion opportunities within the firm binds workers to employers and vice versa. It facilitates decentralization, participation, and delegation because it helps promote trust across hierarchical levels . . . Promotion from within also offers an incentive for performing well, and although tied to monetary reward, promotion is a reward that also has a status-based, nonmonetary component. Perhaps most important, it provides a sense of fairness and justice in the work place. (p. 53)

Enabling others to act must establish high-involvement management practices - practices that are essential for the overall success of the organization. It also "reinforces the organizations commitment to using participative decision-making process" (Lawler, 1992, p. 225-226). By actively involving employees in the organization Lawler (1992) says:

It not only leads to the development of better policies and practices but also ultimately leads to quicker implementation and better acceptance of the policies and practices because they have more credibility with the work force. And because employees have developed the policies and practices, they are in an excellent



position to lead the communication effort by talking to other employees and becoming part of the training process. (p. 227)

Inclusiveness of employees reflect an organizational belief that rank is not as important as contribution. Inclusiveness communicates the importance of each individual in the organization and reflects a horizontal chain of command as opposed to the vertical, top down hierarchy (Helgesen, 1995).

Independence and interdependence are also important factors in this component of enabling others to act. Interdependence requires active thought plus deliberate interaction with others for the purpose of discussing problems, developing and testing ideas, formulating plans and doing and perfecting work. Interdependence requires actively collaborating with and making a contribution to others-the organization, your customers, and your colleagues. (Hakim, 1994 p. 79)

Meaningful contributions and working independently as well as interdependently, are the basics of enabling others to act. It reflects a leadership style that values others for their time and talents.

Employees should have some autonomy, a say in the decisions of the organization, be empowered to solve problems and to make changes on their own, to a certain extent. John Case calls it "participatory management" but its meaning is enabling others to act responsibly. Case (1995) says

"Participation, from a manager's point of view, means giving people a say. It means explaining the options and then listening (carefully!) to their opinions" (p. 95).

Modeling The Way. Leaders who model the way as defined by Kouzes and Posner (1997)

...establish principles concerning the way people (constituents, colleagues, and customers alike) should be treated and the way goals should be pursued. They create standards of excellence and then set an example for others to follow. Because the prospect of complex change can overwhelm people and stifle action, they set interim goals so that people can achieve small wins as they work toward larger objectives. They unravel bureaucracy when it impedes action; they put up signposts when people are unsure of where to go or how to get there; and they create opportunities for victory. (p. 9)

Norman Schwarzkopf, one of the Army's most highly honored, four star generals of the twenty first century, was a man who believe in modeling to others. He exemplified a standard of excellence that men and women under him, as well as many others, have tried to replicate. He set high standards both for himself and for others but was willing to show them how to achieve those standards through illustration and example. At one point in his career, he found it necessary to set five important goals for himself to achieve success with a certain command. He made his list and the

last goal on it was “. . . a responsibility to teach my subordinates, just as my mentors had taught me” (Schwarzkopf & Petre, 1992, p. 237). Example is the trademark of good leadership.

Modeling the way involves several processes that leaders need to learn to be effective. It is not just showing others what to do by example, although that is a part of modeling, it is also taking three specific steps. These are:

First, determine the competencies you want to develop, and then break complex skills down into subskills. Demonstrate . . . incorporating many brief examples. Use “models” that are similar to your audience . . . As people perfect their skills, especially new ones, provide informational feedback on how they are doing. Focus on the corrective changes that need to be made, instead of emphasizing what was wrong or flawed. Keep in mind that feedback should be given to build confidence. This result is achieved by calling attention to successes and improvements, while correcting deficiencies. . . Finally, give people the opportunity to practice new skills, especially in situations where they are likely to produce good results. Sufficient success using what they have learned is necessary so that they believe in themselves and in the value of the new ways. (Kouzes & Posner, 1993, p. 182)

In summary, these three leadership skills are (1) modeling,

(2) guiding, and (3) giving appropriate and positive feedback.

Modeling by example is more difficult than one might imagine. The skill requires not only that the individual knows intimately what they're doing but also that they are able to communicate that knowledge to others. Max DePree (1987) states it like this: "Intimacy with a job leads one to understand that when training people to do a job, one needs to teach not only the skill of the job but the art of it as well" (p. 50). The art of a job is its essence, it is the essential proficiency of the job. Modeling proficiency is vital to productivity. It is important when modeling a method or way to do something that each part or step be clearly defined. Encourage taking small steps to begin with and move on from there. Small steps will eventually lead to creating a larger picture. James Collins and Jerry Porras (1994) advice is: ". . . it's easier to tolerate failed experiments when they are just that-experiments, not massive corporate failures. Keep in mind that small incremental steps can form the basis of significant strategic shifts" (p. 184).

Modeling is an effective and proficient method of getting others to do what is important as well as what is needed for the best interest of an organization. It is important to take small steps and celebrate victories along the way. This practice will represent to others that the

leader not only knows how to talk the talk but can also walk the walk.

Encouraging the Heart. Encouraging the heart as defined by Kouzes and Posner (1997) is

Accomplishing extraordinary things in organizations is hard work. To keep hope and determination alive, leaders recognize contributions that individuals make. In every winning team, the members need to share in the rewards of their efforts, so leaders celebrate accomplishments. They make people feel like heroes (p. 9).

The practice of encouraging the heart is one that motivates others to work hard and well. This is usually accomplished through the use of extrinsic rewards. Productivity makes an organization vital and successful. McKenzie and Lee (1998) strongly believe that the tie to productive organizations may well come from the employers incentive program. This may include, but be limited to, above average benefits, fringe benefits, and profit sharing, as well as personal recognition through bonus incentives.

Alfie Kohn, however, cautions that using only external rewards will not satisfy the need most people have for feeling important and that their work makes a difference. Kohn (1993) asks "Do rewards motivate people? Absolutely, They motivate people to get rewards" (p. 67). So, if this is true, then why is the practice of encouraging others so highly valued? Because it is more than just giving rewards

for the sake of giving them. It is a practice of valuing people for being who they are and for the jobs that they do.

Rewards affect peoples feelings. The feelings they have about themselves and their work. Steers, Porter & Bigley say ". . . rewards can also influence intrinsic motivation through changes in feelings of competence and self-determination. Rewards or outcomes that reassure people they are competent or self-determining tend to increase their intrinsic motivation to perform" (p. 497). The intrinsic motivation to perform is the key to employees coming back day after day to do their jobs and to do them well. It is their feeling of personal significance. This sense of personal significance is highly tied to the success of the organization. Bolman and Deal (1995) believe that "We build significance through the use of many expressive and symbolic forms; rituals, ceremonies, icons, music, and stories. Humans have always created and used symbolic forms as a foundation for meaning" (p. 110). Meaning is the important idea here. Employees need to have meaning in their lives and in their work. Meaning can be achieved by a skillful leader that practices encouragement of others through recognizing their individual, as well as collective, achievements and celebrating their accomplishments.

It is because of the previous findings that the Leadership Practices Inventory was chosen as the instrument for this study. Kouzes and Posner wrote this instrument, after much research, out of the belief that specific

leadership behaviors were essential and that these practices could be taught and learned. The following is a discussion of the Leadership Practices Inventory.

Leadership Practices Inventory.

In his book, The Pyramid Climbers, Vince Packard wrote what James Kouzes and Barry Posner believe to be the most legitimate definition of leadership. It is: "In essence, leadership appears to be the art of getting others to want to do something you are convinced should be done" (Kouzes and Posner, 1987, p. 1). This definition is the premise with which Kouzes and Posner began their research on the qualities of exceptional leaders. They (Kouzes & Posner, 1987) asked hundreds of managers to describe their "personal best experiences" (p. 309). These experiences represent a time when the manager "got something extraordinary accomplished in their organization" (Kouzes & Posner, 1987, p. 309). They wanted to know what the experiences of the managers were and how the managers perceived those experiences to have influenced their success. Kouzes and Posner (1987) writes:

Through our studies we have discovered that the ordinary executives who convinced others to join them on pioneering journeys followed the path of a three-phase strategy. We refer to it as the VIP - vision-involvement-persistence-model of leadership.

When people described their personal best leadership experiences, they told of times when they

imagined exciting, highly attractive futures for their organizations. They had visions and dreams of what could be. They had absolute and total personal belief, and they were confident in their abilities to make extraordinary things happen.

These leaders recognized that grand dreams do not become significant realities through the actions of a single leader. They knew that scores of people were needed to create, produce, sell, and sponsor the vision. The involvement of many others is key to making it all the way to the top.

Our sample of leaders acted on their wise understanding that new tomorrows are not realized without hard work and persistence. The personal best projects were distinguished by the fact that all of them required relentless effort, steadfastness, competence, planning, attention to detail, and encouragement (p. 7). Throughout their studies, Kouzes and Posner discovered that an important key to making it to the top was a personal commitment to involving others in the overall success of the organization.

From their research, Kouzes and Posner (1987) concluded that "Good leadership, it seems, is not only an understandable but also a universal process" (p. xxi). Their conclusions also support the belief that leadership is not something "mystical or ethereal" (Kouzes & Posner, 1987, p. 13) but rather it is through following specific behavior



commitments that one can create a good representation of leading others. Kouzes & Posner discovered:

It is a myth that only a lucky few can ever decipher the leadership code . . . The belief that leadership cannot be learned is a far more powerful deterrent to development than is the nature of the leadership process itself (p. 13).

Their studies uncovered five fundamental practices that empower managers to produce extraordinary results. Those practices are: (1) challenging the process, (2) inspiring a shared vision, (3) enabling others to act, (4) modeling the way, and (5) encouraging the heart (Kouzes & Posner, 1987, p. 8). From these basic practices, they elaborated and added two subcategories per each section mentioned above. They called these subcategories "behavior commitments" (p. 14). Kouzes and Posner (1987) defined the two behavioral commitments under each personal best leadership categories as:

#### Challenging the Process

1. Search for Opportunities
2. Experiment and Take Risks

#### Inspiring a Shared Vision

3. Envision the Future
4. Enlist Others

#### Enabling Others to Act

5. Foster Collaboration
6. Strengthen Others

### Modeling the Way

- 7. Set the Example
- 8. Plan Small Wins

### Encouraging the Heart

- 9. Recognize Individual Contribution
- 10. Celebrate Accomplishments (p. 14)

Their extensive research led to the development of the Leadership Practices Inventory. This unique instrument provides "an opportunity for individuals to consider their workplace behavior within the context of a specific conceptual model" (Jurrow, 1998, p. 178). There are two forms of this instrument, the Self and the Other. These forms differ "only in whether the behavior described is the respondent's (Self) or that of another specific person (Other)" (Kouzes & Posner, 1987, p. 312).

### Research on the LPI and Elementary Principals

"It is clearly evident from early research efforts that where principals are good, schools are good" (Hughes & Ubben, 1994, p. 14). This implies that student scores are high, staff morale is good and parent/community relations are alive and thriving under a good principal's leadership. The leadership behaviors of administrators are real, tangible and easily determined. The identification of those behaviors are valuable as school personnel consider various applicants to fill the leadership positions within their districts. Choosing an administrator to fit into the climate and needs of a specific building requires employers to investigate the

strengths and weaknesses of its applicants. The National Association of Elementary School Principals (1990) writes:

There must be someone to take the initiative in forging a consensus on the goals and beliefs that direct the school's educational program and to articulate and interpret those goals to all members of the school community. The leadership provided by the principal is essential for the development and maintenance of a school organization and climate that is consistently conducive to quality education. (p. 12).

Predicting with some certainty the way in which a person relates to others, analyzes problems, articulates goals and perceives the needs of others are only a few of the numerous advantages that could help employers identify and hire administrators who would effectively lead successful schools. Therefore, it is the intent of this research to contribute to the examination of the leadership behaviors of elementary principals from both higher and lower socio-economic elementary schools to determine if there are any disparities as self-reported using the Leadership Practices Inventory.

### Summary

It is clear from the literature that climate, personality, individual and collective demands and needs, as well as political pressures are critical aspects of how an administrator responds to the role of their job. Leadership characteristics seem to have diverse definitions according to different theories but leadership behaviors seem more easily

identified. This chapter discussed the literature review which focused upon four specific types of leadership theories: trait theory, behavior theory, contingency theory and transformational theory. It also included leadership characteristics and behaviors, leadership characteristics and the school principal and leadership behavior and the LPI.

This study was interested in finding if there were leadership behavior differences in principals of elementary schools from low and high socio-economic backgrounds. These variables were chosen so that principals who were currently working in those classified schools could give their immediate and candid responses as they perceived them to be in their particular circumstance. The next chapter discusses a description of the subjects, the instrumentation, the data collection, the analysis and the limitations of the study.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

##### Overview

Five sections are discussed in chapter three: (1) the description of subjects, (2) the instrumentation, (3) the data collection, (4) the analysis, and (5) the limitations.

##### Description of Subjects

A total of 80 principals were asked to participate in this study, a sampling of 40 principals from high socio-economic schools and a sampling of 40 principals from low socio-economic schools, as measured by the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program in the state of Nebraska.

The schools were identified by the researcher from a list distributed by the Nebraska Department of Education that identified every elementary school and its' district in the state and their total student enrollment number. It also listed the total number of children that participated in free or reduced lunches for the school year 2000-2001 and the percentage of free and reduced lunch children that was represented for each school in the district as well as for the district as a whole. Example:

<u>District Name</u>	<u>Free/Reduced</u>	<u>Total Enroll.</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Cedar Rapids Public	82	205	40.00%
Cedar Rapids Jr/Sr.High	44	112	39.29%
Cedar Rapids Elementary	38	93	40.86%

The researcher anticipated receiving at least 50% or above return from the 40 principals from high socio-economic schools and 50% or above return from the 40 principals from low socio-economic schools within the state of Nebraska.

For this study, an elementary school was defined as a school serving Pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten through Fourth, Fifth or Sixth Grades with at least 6 teachers. Middle and Junior High Schools are not included in this study.

High socio-economic schools were selected from a sampling of 40 schools that were identified in 2001 in the list of elementary schools who disclosed the least number of families who qualified for free or reduced lunches to the Nebraska State Department of Education. Ranges in free and reduced lunch percentages were from 0% to 8.25%.

Low socio-economic schools were selected from a sampling of 40 schools that were identified in 2001 in the list of elementary schools who have disclosed the most number of families who qualify for free or reduced lunches to the Nebraska State Department of Education. Ranges in free and reduced lunch percentages were from 65.85% to 92.86%

Principals with 1 year or more experience in a qualified school district were asked to participate. Superintendents who serve as elementary principals and lead teachers who administer qualified school districts participated in this study. Principals who have responsibilities for more than one similar building did qualify to participate.

### Description of the Instrument

One formal instrument was utilized in this study. This section will review the validity and reliability of the Leadership Practices Inventory.

### The Leadership Practices Inventory

The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) is used to provide feedback to leaders and/or others regarding the leader's use of certain leadership behaviors that have been determined to be effective leadership practices. The LPI Self form (also known as the LPI-SELF) is comprised of thirty statements - six statements for measuring each of the five leadership practices. Those five leadership practices are: (1) challenging the process, (2) inspiring a shared vision, (3) enabling others to act, (4) modeling the way, and (5) encouraging the heart (Kouzes & Posner, 1987).

Each statement is cast on a ten-point Likert scale. The observer is asked to rate his/her leadership qualities to the practice of specific leadership behaviors according to his/her self perception. The LPI-SELF provides information on each of the five leadership behaviors identified by Kouzes and Posner's research: challenging, inspiring, enabling, modeling, and encouraging.

The Leadership Practices Inventory has been proven to be designed appropriately and is very reliable. "Internal reliability on the LPI-Self ranged from .69 to .85. Test-retest reliability . . . . averaged better than .93" (Kouzes & Posner, 1987, p. 313). Jurrow (1998) writes "This model

focuses attention on behavior that supports the development of the positive, future-oriented, challenging, and enabling workplace that many of us are striving to create" (p. 178). It is also considered to have high validity. "Given that the items on the LPI are related to the statements that workshop participants generally make about their own or others' personal-best leadership experiences, the LPI has excellent face validity" (Kouzes & Posner, 1997, p. 94). It also has been proven to have high predictive and/or concurrent validity.

The LPI has excellent payoff validity, as shown by studies of the relationship between LPI scores and such variables as work-group performance, team cohesiveness, member commitment and loyalty, satisfaction (both with the job and with the leader), upward influence, and credibility. (Kouzes & Posner, 1997, p. 94).

#### Data Collection and Analysis

The IRB proposal was applied for and accepted on April 3, 2001, which was prior to the beginning of any research.

One set of data was collected from each of the elementary principals: The Leadership Practices Inventory.

During the month of May, 2001, a sampling of 40 principals from high socio-economic schools and a sampling of 40 principals from low socio-economic schools within the state of Nebraska were contacted by telephone and asked to participate in the study.

Upon obtaining agreement to participate from 77 of the



80 principals, the researcher mailed a cover letter and the questionnaire to each principal with information explaining the Leadership Practices Inventory and insuring anonymity. A self addressed return envelope was enclosed.

A date of completion was asked of each principal when the instrument was delivered. Each participant's response was asked to be mailed back to the researcher by that date.

The instrument was distributed during the month of May, 2001 and asked to be returned no later than the last week in May, 2001.

Data from the instrument was analyzed individually and compiled for total assessed information. Further evaluation was done to see if there is a statistically significant difference between leadership practices, as measured by the Leadership Practices Inventory, of principals of high socio-economic elementary schools and principals of low socio-economic elementary schools, as measured by the federal free lunch schedule, in the state of Nebraska.

Data from the instrument was assessed to determine each principal's leadership behavior.

Five t-tests were run to compare scores to see if there was a statistically significant difference at the .01 level between leadership behaviors of those principals from high socio-economic elementary schools as compared with those principals from low socio-economic elementary schools as defined by the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI).

### Limitations of the Study

The following limitations are applicable to this study:

1. This study was limited to the theory and specific examples of leadership practices as defined by the Leadership Practices Inventory by Kouzes and Posner.
2. This study was limited to the data collected during the month of May, 2001.
3. This study was limited to a sampling of those 34 principals from high socio-economic schools and 37 principals from low socio-economic schools as measured by the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program, in the state of Nebraska.
4. This study was limited in its generalizability to a sampling of 34 principals from high socio-economic schools and a sampling of 37 principals from low socio-economic schools, as measured by the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program in the state of Nebraska.
5. This study was limited in its generalizability by the use of the Leadership Practices Inventory insofar as the instrument is based on a particular leadership model.
6. This study is limited by the truthfulness and accuracy of the observers' rating of their leadership behaviors.

7. This study is limited by the truthfulness and accuracy of the researcher.

### Summary

Chapter Three has presented the following five areas.

1. Description of Subjects

The participants in this study were a sampling of 34 principals from high socio-economic schools and a sampling of 37 principals from low socio-economic schools as measured by the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program in the state of Nebraska. A total of 80 elementary school principals were asked to participate, 77 agreed to participate in this research and 71 actually participated.

2. Instrumentation

One formal instrument was utilized in the study; The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI).

3. Data Collection

One set of data was collected from each of the elementary principals: The Leadership Practices Inventory.

4. Analysis

Data from the instrument was assessed to determine each principal's leadership behavior. Five t-tests were run to compare scores to see if there was a statistically significant difference between leadership behaviors of those principals from high socio-economic elementary schools as

compared with those principals from low socio-economic elementary schools as defined by the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI).

#### 5. Limitations

The following limitations are applicable to this study:

1. This study was limited to the theory and specific examples of leadership practices as defined by the Leadership Practices Inventory by Kouzes and Posner.
2. This study was limited to the data collected during the month of May, 2001.
3. This study was limited to a sampling of 34 principals from high socio-economic schools and a sampling of 37 principals from low socio-economic schools as measured by the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program, in the state of Nebraska.
4. This study was limited in its generalizability to a sampling of 34 principals from high socio-economic schools and a sampling of 37 principals from low socio-economic schools, as measured by the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program in the state of Nebraska.
5. This study was limited in its generalizability by the use of the Leadership Practices Inventory insofar as the instrument is based

on a particular leadership model.

6. This study is limited by the truthfulness and accuracy of the observers' rating of their leadership behaviors.

7. This study is limited by the truthfulness and accuracy of the researcher.

Chapter four will now overview the results of the study which will include: the need and purpose of the study, the subjects and their return rate, the statistical analysis, a review of the research question and a summary.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

#### Overview

Five sections are included in chapter four: (1) the need and purpose for the study, (2) the subjects and their return rate, (3) the statistical analysis, (4) a review of the research question, and (5) a summary.

#### Need and Purpose for the Study

Principals are a primary force within a school. They set the climate of the school, and they are the most highly visible instructional leaders of the school. Principals provide the leadership that most determines the failure or success of a school, therefore, it is important to investigate the specific leadership practices and behaviors of school principals.

The researcher was curious to find if there were differences in leadership behaviors of principals from low and high socio-economic schools because little literature was found that addressed this particular area of interest.

The purpose of this study was to discover whether or not there are differences between leadership practices, as measured by the Leadership Practices Inventory, of principals of high socio-economic elementary schools and principals of low socio-economic elementary schools, as measured by the federal free lunch schedule, in the state of Nebraska.

#### Subjects and return rate

A total of 80 principals were asked to participate in

this study, a sampling of 40 principals from high socio-economic schools and a sampling of 40 principals from low socio-economic schools, as measured by the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program in the state of Nebraska.

High socio-economic schools were selected from a sampling of the top 40 schools that were identified in 2001 in the list of elementary schools who disclosed the least number of families who qualified for free or reduced lunches to the Nebraska State Department of Education. Ranges in free and reduced lunch percentages were from 0% to 8.25%.

Low socio-economic schools were selected from a sampling of the bottom 40 schools that were identified in 2001 in the list of elementary schools who have disclosed the most number of families who qualify for free or reduced lunches to the Nebraska State Department of Education. Ranges in free and reduced lunch percentages were from 65.85% to 92.86%.

Principals with 1 year or more experience in a qualified school district were asked to participate. Superintendents who serve as elementary principals and lead teachers who administer qualified school districts participated in this study. Principals who have responsibilities for more than one similar building did qualify to participate.

During the month of May, 2001, principals from identified schools were personally contacted by the researcher to explain the study and to inquire if the principal was willing to participate. Upon agreement to participate, The Leadership Practices Inventory was sent

directly to each participant. A return, self addressed, stamped envelope was included in the mailing. Of the 80 principals who were contacted, 77 agreed to participate, and a total of 71 completed and returned the Leadership Practices Inventory. Of the 71, 37 were from the low socio-economic group and 34 were from the high socio-economic group. This represents 92% of the total number of principals who agreed to participate.

### Statistical Analysis

T values are found by using Levene's test for equality of variance p scores to determine equal or unequal t values. The p value of Levene's test needs to be .05 or less in order for the t value to be unequal. P values are the results of t-tests and are included in this section. P values are the probability of finding a difference through chance in the sampling when there is no difference in the population. Effect size is also included in this section. Cohen (1988) defined d as the difference between the means,  $M_1 - M_2$ , divided by the average standard deviation of the two groups.

Each of the five practices uses six specific questions that relate to that particular practice. Kouzes and Posner have identified each question as an important behavior which provides evidence of the leadership practice. Selected questions for each practice are identified under each of the five practices.

Five t-tests using the Leadership Practices Inventory scores for the two groups using the five practices (1)



challenging the process, (2) inspiring a shared vision, (3) enabling others to act, (4) modeling the way, and (5) encouraging the heart were analyzed. The results are as follows:

The first practice is challenging the process. Six questions are combined to define this practice. They are questions 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, and 26 (see Appendix A). A t-test was used to analyze differences in the mean scores of principals from high and low socio-economic elementary schools on challenging the process. The t-test indicates a t value of 1.59. There is no statistically significant difference between the two groups' scores ( $p = .12$ ). However, a close-to-medium effect size of .4 (see Table 1) is evident with the low socio-economic group scoring higher on the mean score than the high socio-economic group. Given the effect size, further examination with larger numbers may be worthwhile.

The second practice is inspiring a shared vision. Six questions are combined to define this practice. They are questions 2, 7, 12, 17, 22, and 27 (see Appendix A). A t-test was used to analyze differences in the mean scores of principals from high and low socio-economic elementary schools on inspiring a shared vision. The t-test indicates a t value of 1.53. There is no statistically significant difference between the two groups' scores ( $p = .13$ ). However, a close-to-medium effect size of .4 (see Table 1) is evident with the low socio-economic group scoring higher on the mean

score than the high socio-economic group. Given the effect size, further examination with larger numbers may be worthwhile.

Table 1

T-test results of Leadership Behaviors of Elementary School Principals from High Socio-Economic Schools as Compared with those Principals from Low Socio-Economic Elementary Schools as Defined by the Dimensions of the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)

Practice	<u>Socio-Economic Group*</u>				
	<u>Lowest(N=37)</u>		<u>Highest(N=34)</u>		
	T Values	P Values	M(SD)	M(SD)	d**
Challenging the Process	1.59	.12	48.49(6.5)	46.09(6.2)	.4
Inspiring a Shared Vision	1.53	.13	48.24(7.1)	45.80(6.4)	.4
Enabling Others to Act	-.39	.7	52.54(3.9)	52.88(3.4)	.1
Modeling the Way	1.14	.26	53.94(4.7)	51.94(4.5)	.3
Encouraging the Heart	1.11	.27	50.00(7.7)	48.18(6.1)	.3

\* Three principals were removed from this analysis due to unwillingness to respond.

\*\* Using Cohen's measure of effect sizes, .2 = small, .5 = medium, and .8 = large.

The third practice is enabling others to act. Six questions are combined to define this practice. They are questions 3, 8, 13, 18, 23, and 28 (see Appendix A). A t-test was used to analyze differences in the mean scores of principals from high and low socio-economic elementary schools on enabling others to act. The t-test indicates a t value of  $-.39$ . There is no statistically significant difference between the two groups' scores ( $p = .7$ ). The effect size of  $.1$  (see Table 1) is less-than-small.

The fourth practice is modeling the way. Six questions are combined to define this practice. They are questions 3, 9, 14, 19, 24, and 29 (see Appendix A). A t-test was used to analyze differences in the mean scores of principals from high and low socio-economic elementary schools on modeling the way. The t-test indicates a t value of  $1.14$ . There is no statistically significant difference between the two groups' scores ( $p = .26$ ). However, a small-to-medium effect size of  $.3$  (see Table 1) is evident with the low socio-economic group scoring higher on the mean score than the high socio-economic group. Given the effect size further examination with larger numbers may be worthwhile.

The fifth practice is encouraging the heart. Six questions are combined to define this practice. They are questions 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30 (see Appendix A). A t-test was used to analyze differences in the mean scores of principals from high and low socio-economic elementary schools on encouraging the heart. The t-test indicates a

t value of 1.11. There is no statistically significant difference between the two groups' scores ( $p = .27$ ). However, an almost medium effect size is evident (see Table 1) with the low socio-economic group scoring higher on the mean score than the high socio-economic group. Given the effect size of .3 (see Table 1), further examination with larger numbers may be worthwhile.

#### Research Question

Is there a statistically significant difference between leadership behaviors of those principals from high socio-economic elementary schools as compared with those principals from low socio-economic elementary schools as defined by the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)?

#### Summary

The t-tests run on the five leadership practices resulted in each showing no statistically significant difference. The mean scores of principals from high socio-economic schools were compared with the mean scores of principals from low socio-economic elementary schools when using the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI).

Examination of the results of this study, especially in regard to effect sizes, indicates that further research with a larger sample size may be worth pursuing. Two practices, challenging the process and inspiring a shared vision, had effect sizes of .4, which are close-to-medium, which indicate that the low socio-economic group had higher mean scores than the high socio-economic group. Two other practices, modeling

the way and encouraging the heart, had effect sizes of .3, which are small-to-medium, which also indicate that the low socio-economic group scored higher mean scores than the higher socio-economic group. One practice, enabling others to act, had a less-than-small effect size of .1.

Chapter five will now examine the implications of these results.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the leadership behavior differences, if any, between principals from lower and higher socio-economic elementary schools as measured by the Leadership Practices Inventory.

#### Research Question

The specific research question was:

Is there a statistically significant difference between leadership behaviors of those principals from high socio-economic elementary schools as compared with those principals from low socio-economic elementary schools as defined by the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI).

#### Methodology

A total of 80 principals were asked to participate in this study, a sampling of 40 principals from high socio-economic schools and a sampling of 40 principals from low socio-economic schools, as measured by the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program in the state of Nebraska.

High socio-economic schools were selected from a sampling of the top 40 schools that were identified in 2001 in the list of elementary schools who disclosed the least number of families who qualified for free or reduced lunches to the Nebraska State Department of Education. Ranges in free and reduced lunch percentages were from 0% to 8.25%.

Low socio-economic schools were selected from a sampling of the bottom 40 schools that were identified in 2001 in the

list of elementary schools who have disclosed the most number of families who qualify for free or reduced lunches to the Nebraska State Department of Education. Ranges in free and reduced lunch percentages were from 65.85% to 92.86%.

Principals with 1 year or more experience in a qualified school district were asked to participate. Superintendents who serve as elementary principals and lead teachers who administer qualified school districts participated in this study. Principals who have responsibilities for more than one similar building did qualify to participate.

During the month of May, 2001, principals from identified schools were personally contacted by the researcher to explain the study and to inquire if the principal was willing to participate. Upon agreement to participate, The Leadership Practices Inventory was sent directly to each participant. A return, self addressed, stamped envelope was included in the mailing. Of the 80 principals who were contacted, 77 agreed to participate, and a total of 71 completed and returned the Leadership Practices Inventory. Of the 71, 37 were from the low socio-economic group and 34 were from the high socio-economic group. This represents approximately 92% of the total schools identified to participate.

#### Results summary

The study found there were no statistically significant leadership behavior differences between the two groups of principals. Each of the five practices (1) challenging the



process, (2) inspiring a shared vision, (3) enabling others to act, (4) modeling the way, and (5) encouraging the heart from the Leadership Practices Inventory were analyzed.

#### Discussion of the findings

On the basis of this study, no statistically significant differences in leadership behaviors are evident from this data between principals from the two socio-economic groups. However, based on the effect sizes on four of the five leadership practices an implication may follow that, with a larger sample size and further investigation, differences may exist. Four of the five differences were close-to-medium in effect size. Several speculations can be made regarding the results showing that the low socio-economic group had higher scores than the high socio-economic group had in four of the five practices: challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, modeling the way and encouraging the heart.

The practice of challenging the process refers to items like seeking out challenging opportunities for self and others (questions 1 and 6, see Appendix A), finding new and innovative methods for improvement (question 11), and experimenting and taking risks, overcoming obstacles and learning from mistakes (questions 16, 21, and 26). Since principals from lower socio-economic schools had higher mean scores on this practice than principals from higher socio-economic schools, it may be speculated that the lower socio-economic principals may be more aware of the importance of doing such activities as mentioned above. This awareness may

originate from experiences that teachers and administrators from lower socio-economic schools often encounter with students who are non-motivated and difficult to engage in the learning process. Principals of lower socio-economic schools may, therefore, disproportionately support and encourage their teachers to investigate and implement wider varieties of learning methods. It may also be that the teachers themselves may be forced by their students, who could be bored with traditional learning methods, to be more innovative in their teaching approaches and strategies.

The practice of inspiring a shared vision refers to items pertaining to imaging what the future will be. Each of the six questions, 2, 7, 12, 17, 22, and 27 (see Appendix A), invite people to consider, visualize and create a learning environment that will be different, exciting, productive and possible. Principals from lower socio-economic schools had higher mean scores for this practice than principals from higher socio-economic schools. Students who are most at-risk often have difficulty defining and establishing future goals for themselves because they are so wrapped up with the here and now that they have no focal point from which to begin dreaming about a different and better future. Consequently principals from lower socio-economic schools may know from these experiences that the need of the staff should be on trying to help students focus on a bright and positive future rather than on a present situation which may seem depressing and/or impossible. Because of their daily work environment,

these principals may be more aware of the need to facilitate teachers and staff in finding and focusing upon shared goals and accomplishments and away from seemingly present failures.

The practice of modeling the way refers to items that foster collaboration (questions 3, 9, 14, and 24, see Appendix A) and strengthen people's capabilities (questions 19 and 29). Setting an example and "helping others achieve small wins as they work toward larger objectives" (Kouzes & Posner, 1997, p. 4) are high priorities with this practice. Because principals from lower socio-economic schools had higher mean scores for this practice than principals from higher socio-economic schools, one may speculate that those principals have learned how important it is for the staff to feel supported and empowered.

The practice of encouraging the heart refers to items that recognize individual contributions (questions 10, 15, 20, and 30, see Appendix A) and celebrate the whole group's accomplishments (questions 5 and 25). Principals from lower socio-economic schools had higher mean scores for this practice than principals from higher socio-economic schools. This may be because they recognize the importance for individuals, as well as the group, to feel that their work is recognized and that their efforts and expertise are appreciated.

The t-tests run on the five leadership practices resulted in each showing no statistically significant difference. Several reasons may be evident for these

results. It may be that perhaps principals from each of the two types of schools may not be dissimilar. Their leadership behaviors may well parallel each others. The needs and demands of the socio-economic schools may well call forth certain behaviors to be used more often than others but the repertoire of behaviors of all of the principals may well be very much alike.

Perhaps the selected sample of schools were more similar than they were dissimilar, although they did range from urban elementary schools to rural elementary schools and some were quite large while others were small.

Perhaps a majority of the principals answered the survey by scoring themselves higher than what actually may be true. Perhaps other people, for example those who work for these principals, would have scored this survey quite differently. Teachers' perceptions, observations and experiences of their principals' behaviors may well be different than what the principals believe about themselves.

#### Implications for research

Given the results of this study, more research with a larger population may be worth exploring. The combination of p values and effect sizes seem to indicate that a larger population sample may indicate that leadership behaviors may be related in part to the socio-economic classifications of the school. It is recommended that there be further research to not only include a larger sample size of principals, but to also include staff members of those principals. Obtaining

staff input could help provide a more complete portrayal of the leadership behaviors of the participating principals.

#### Implications for practice

Regardless of the socio-economic background of the school, leadership behaviors have been proven to not be statistically significantly different. This result indicates that the socio-economic background of a school does not dictate particular leadership skills be used more in one school than another. This research study indicates that similar skills may be used in dissimilar schools.

It also communicates to hiring administrators that particular leadership skills for specific buildings may not necessarily be a valid criteria needed when considering applicant principals. Lastly, this research study indicates that educational administrative programs may not necessarily need to address particular leadership skills when considering the training of aspiring administrators for particular schools at different socio-economic levels.

Overall, the purpose of this study was to determine if there were statistically significant differences in leadership behaviors of principals from low and high socio-economic schools. This research study found no such differences. Leadership behaviors and practices as defined in this study may be applied to meet the needs and demands of any socio-economic school.

## REFERENCES

- Bass, B.M. (1990). Bass & Stogdill's handbook of leadership. New York: Free Press.
- Bennis, W. (1989). On becoming a leader. Wilmington, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc.
- Bennis, W. & Townsend, R. (1995). Reinventing leadership. New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc.
- Bennis, W. & Nanus, B. (1985). Leaders: the strategies for taking charge. New York: Harper & Row.
- Bernard, L.L. (1926). An introduction to social psychology. New York: Harper & Row.
- Bolman, L.G. & Deal, T.E. (1995). Leading with soul. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Burns, J.M. (1978). Leadership. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- Callison, W. & McAllister, C.H. (1999). Elementary school principal's handbook. Lancaster, PA.: Technomic Publishing Company, Inc.
- Calvert, G. (1993). Highwire management: risk-taking tactics for leaders, innovators, and trailblazers. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Case, J. (1995). Open-book management: the coming business revolution. New York: Harper Collins, Publishers, Inc.
- Christensen, D.D. & Feis, P. (1999-2000). Nebraska Education Directory 102nd Edition. Lincoln, NE.: Nebraska Department of Education.

- Cohen, J. (1988). Statistical power analysis for the behavior sciences (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Earlbaum Associates.
- Collins, J.C. & Porras, J.I. (1994). Built to last. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, Inc.
- De Pree, M. (1987). Leadership is an art. East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University Press.
- Fiedler, F.E. (1967). A theory of leadership effectiveness. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Gardner, J.W. (1990). On leadership. New York: The Free Press, A Division of Macmillan, Inc.
- Greenberg, J. (1996). Managing behavior in organizations. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Hakim, C. (1994). We are all self-employed. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.
- Helgesen, S. (1995). The web of inclusion. New York: Currency/Doubleday.
- Hoy, W.K. & Miskel, C.G. (1991). Educational administration: theory, research, and practice. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.
- Hodges Persell, C. & Cookson, Jr., P.W. (1982). The effective principal in action. Bloomington, IN.: Phi Delta Kappa.
- Hughes, L.W. & Ubben, G.C. (1978). The elementary principal's handbook. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

- Jaffe, D.T., Scott, C.D. & Tobe, G.R. (1994). Rekindling commitment: how to revitalize yourself, your work, and your organization. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Jefferies, E. (1996). The heart of leadership. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.
- Jurrow, S. (1998, Mar.). Book reviews. Journal of academic librarianship, 24 (2), 177-178.
- Kanter, R.M. (1983). The change masters. New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc.
- Kohn, A., (1993). Punished by rewards: the trouble with gold stars, incentive plans, a's, praise, and other bribes. New York: Boughton Mifflin Company.
- Kotter, J.P. (1990). A force for change. New York: Free Press.
- Kouzes, J.M. & Posner, B.Z. (1987). The leadership challenge. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Kouzes, J.M. & Posner, B.Z. (1993). Credibility: How leaders gain and lose it, why people demand it. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Kouzes, J.M. & Posner, B.Z. (1997). The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) Participant's Workbook. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Kriegel, R.J. & Patler, L. (1991). If it ain't broke, break it!. New York: Warner Books, Inc.



- Lawler, E.E. III (1992). The ultimate advantage: creating the high-involvement organization. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- McKenzie, R.B. & Lee, D.R. (1998). Managing through incentives: how to develop a more collaborative, productive, and profitable organization. New York: Oxford University Press.
- National Association of Elementary School Principals (1990). Principals for 21st century schools. Alexandria, VA: National Association of Elementary School Principals.
- National Association of Elementary School Principals (1991). Proficiencies for principals, revised. Alexandria, VA: National Association of Elementary School Principals.
- Pearman, R. (1998). Hardwired leadership. Palo Alto, CA: Davies-Black Publishing.
- Peck, M.S. (1978). The road less traveled: a new psychology of love, traditional values and spiritual growth. New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc.
- Pfeffer, J. (1994). Competitive advantage through people: unleashing the power of the work force. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Rost, J.C. (1990). Leadership for the twenty-first century. New York: Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc.
- Schwarzkopf, General N.H. & Petre, P. (1992). The autobiography: it doesn't take a hero. New York: Linda Grey Bantam Books.

- Steers, R. M., Porter, L., & Bigley, G. (1996). Motivation and leadership at work. (6th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Stogdill, R.M. (1974). Handbook of Leadership. New York: The Free Press.
- Tead, O. (1959). Administration: its purposes and performance. (1st ed.). New York: School of Commerce, Accounts, and Finance of New York University.
- Wellins, R.S., Byham, W.C. & Wilson, J.M. (1991). Empowered teams; creating self-directed work groups that improve quality, productivity, and participation. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

APPENDIX A  
Leadership Practices Inventory (Self)

JAMES M. KOUZES/BARRY Z. POSNER

## LEADERSHIP PRACTICES INVENTORY [LPI]

## SELF

## INSTRUCTIONS

Write your name in the blank above. On the next two pages are thirty statements describing various leadership behaviors. Please read each carefully. Then look at the rating scale and decide how frequently you engage in the behavior described.

Here's the rating scale that you'll be using:

- |                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1 = Almost Never    | 6 = Sometimes       |
| 2 = Rarely          | 7 = Fairly Often    |
| 3 = Seldom          | 8 = Usually         |
| 4 = Once in a While | 9 = Very Frequently |
| 5 = Occasionally    | 10 = Almost Always  |

In selecting each response, please be realistic about the extent to which you actually engage in the behavior. Do not answer in terms of how you would like to see yourself or in terms of what you should be doing. Answer in terms of how you typically behave—on most days, on most projects, and with most people.

For each statement, decide on a rating and record it in the blank to the left of the statement. When you have responded to all thirty statements, turn to the response sheet on page 4. Make sure that you write your name on the response sheet in the blank marked "Your Name." Transfer your responses and return the response sheet according to the instructions provided.

For future reference, keep the portion of your LPI-Self form that lists the thirty statements.

# LEADERSHIP PRACTICES INVENTORY [LPI]

## SELF

To what extent do you typically engage in the following behaviors? Choose the number that best applies to each statement and *record it in the blank to the left of the statement.*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Almost Never	Rarely	Seldom	Once in a While	Occasionally	Sometimes	Fairly Often	Usually	Very Frequently	Almost Always

- \_\_\_ 1. I seek out challenging opportunities that test my own skills and abilities.
- \_\_\_ 2. I talk about future trends that will influence how our work gets done.
- \_\_\_ 3. I develop cooperative relationships among the people I work with.
- \_\_\_ 4. I set a personal example of what I expect from others.
- \_\_\_ 5. I praise people for a job well done.
- \_\_\_ 6. I challenge people to try out new and innovative approaches to their work.
- \_\_\_ 7. I describe a compelling image of what our future could be like.
- \_\_\_ 8. I actively listen to diverse points of view.
- \_\_\_ 9. I spend time and energy on making certain that the people I work with adhere to the principles and standards that we have agreed on.
- \_\_\_ 10. I make it a point to let people know about my confidence in their abilities.
- \_\_\_ 11. I search outside the formal boundaries of my organization for innovative ways to improve what we do.
- \_\_\_ 12. I appeal to others to share an exciting dream of the future.
- \_\_\_ 13. I treat others with dignity and respect.
- \_\_\_ 14. I follow through on the promises and commitments that I make.
- \_\_\_ 15. I make sure that people are creatively rewarded for their contributions to the success of our projects.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Almost Never	Rarely	Seldom	Once in a While	Occasionally	Sometimes	Fairly Often	Usually	Very Frequently	Almost Always

- \_\_\_ 16. I ask "What can we learn?" when things do not go as expected.
- \_\_\_ 17. I show others how their long-term interests can be realized by enlisting in a common vision.
- \_\_\_ 18. I support the decisions that people make on their own.
- \_\_\_ 19. I am clear about my philosophy of leadership.
- \_\_\_ 20. I publicly recognize people who exemplify commitment to shared values.
- \_\_\_ 21. I experiment and take risks even when there is a chance of failure.
- \_\_\_ 22. I am contagiously enthusiastic and positive about future possibilities.
- \_\_\_ 23. I give people a great deal of freedom and choice in deciding how to do their work.
- \_\_\_ 24. I make certain that we set achievable goals, make concrete plans, and establish measurable milestones for the projects and programs that we work on.
- \_\_\_ 25. I find ways to celebrate accomplishments.
- \_\_\_ 26. I take the initiative to overcome obstacles even when outcomes are uncertain.
- \_\_\_ 27. I speak with genuine conviction about the higher meaning and purpose of our work.
- \_\_\_ 28. I ensure that people grow in their jobs by learning new skills and developing themselves.
- \_\_\_ 29. I make progress toward goals one step at a time.
- \_\_\_ 30. I give the members of the team lots of appreciation and support for their contributions.

*Now turn to the response sheet and follow the instructions for transferring your responses.*

# LEADERSHIP PRACTICES INVENTORY [LPI]

## SELF

### RESPONSE SHEET

Instructions: Write your name in the blank above. Separate this response sheet from the rest of the LPI by tearing along the perforated line. Transfer the ratings for the statements to the blanks provided on this sheet. Please notice that the numbers of the statements on this sheet are listed from left to right.

After you have transferred all ratings, return the form according to the "Important Further Instructions" below.

- |           |           |           |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____  | 2. _____  | 3. _____  | 4. _____  | 5. _____  |
| 6. _____  | 7. _____  | 8. _____  | 9. _____  | 10. _____ |
| 11. _____ | 12. _____ | 13. _____ | 14. _____ | 15. _____ |
| 16. _____ | 17. _____ | 18. _____ | 19. _____ | 20. _____ |
| 21. _____ | 22. _____ | 23. _____ | 24. _____ | 25. _____ |
| 26. _____ | 27. _____ | 28. _____ | 29. _____ | 30. _____ |

#### Important Further Instructions

After completing this response sheet, return it to:

---



---



---

**APPENDIX B****Institutional Review Board Approval Letter**





Institutional Review Board (IRB)  
Office of Regulatory Affairs (ORA)  
University of Nebraska Medical Center  
Service Building 3000  
987630 Nebraska Medical Center  
Omaha, NE 68196-7630  
(402) 559-6463  
Fax: (402) 559-3300  
E-mail: irbora@unmc.edu  
http://www.unmc.edu/irb

April 3, 2001

Marilou Niemeyer-Greene  
Ed. Admin. Kayser Hall  
UNO - VIA COURIER

IRB#: 135-01-EX

TITLE OF PROTOCOL: A Comparative Study of Leadership Behaviors of Principals  
From High and Low Socio-Economic Elementary Schools

Dear Ms. Niemeyer Greene

The IRB has reviewed your Exemption Form for the above-titled research project. According to the information provided, this project is exempt under 45 CFR 46.101b, category 2. You are therefore authorized to begin the research.

It is understood this project will be conducted in full accordance with all applicable sections of the IRB Guidelines. It is also understood that the IRB will be immediately notified of any proposed changes that may affect the exempt status of your research project.

Please be advised that the IRB has a maximum protocol approval period of three years from the original date of approval and release. If this study continues beyond the three year approval period, the project must be resubmitted in order to maintain an active approval status.

Sincerely,

Ernest D. Prentice, Ph.D.  
Co-Chair, IRB

gdk

APPENDIX C  
Survey Cover Letter

Dear Educator,

Thank you for participating in this study. As I mentioned on the phone, my dissertation is comparing the leadership behaviors of principals from lower and higher socio-economic elementary public schools in the state of Nebraska as determined by the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program using the Leadership Practices Inventory. The inventory should take you no more than 15 - 20 minutes to complete. **Please be assured that all responses will remain confidential.**

If you would like a copy of the final report of this study, please write your name and mailing address on the back of the answer sheet, and I will be happy to send you a copy upon completion of the study. A self-addressed, stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Again, thank you for your time, interest and participation.

Educationally yours,

Marilou Niemeyer Greene

## APPENDIX D

### A Sample of 40 High Percent Free and Reduced Lunch Schools

A Sampling of 40 High Socio-Economic Schools and their  
Percent of Free and Reduced Lunches.

School Number 1	0%
School Number 2	0%
School Number 3	0%
School Number 4	0%
School Number 5	0%
School Number 6	0%
School Number 7	.62%
School Number 8.	.62%
School Number 9	.79%
School Number 10	1.17%
School Number 11	1.33%
School Number 12	1.50%
School Number 13	1.57%
School Number 14	1.68%
School Number 15	1.68%
School Number 16	1.69%
School Number 17	1.96%
School Number 18	2.53%
School Number 19	3.01%
School Number 20	3.83%
School Number 21	4.74%
School Number 22	4.81%
School Number 23	4.94%
School Number 24	5.16%
School Number 25	5.62%
School Number 25	5.64%
School Number 27	5.71%
School Number 28	5.78%
School Number 29	6.02%
School Number 30	6.19%
School Number 31	6.22%
School Number 32	6.56%
School Number 33	6.70%
School Number 34	7.27%
School Number 35	7.69%
School Number 36	7.86%
School Number 37	7.99%
School Number 38	8.00%
School Number 39	8.13%
School Number 40	8.25%

## APPENDIX E

### A Sample of 40 Low Percent Free and Reduced Lunch Schools

A Sampling of 40 Low Socio-Economic Schools and their  
Percent of Free and Reduced Lunches.

School Number 41	92.86%
School Number 42	89.97%
School Number 43	88.42%
School Number 44	87.50%
School Number 45	85.26%
School Number 46	85.07%
School Number 47	84.82%
School Number 48.	83.57%
School Number 49	83.46%
School Number 50	83.40%
School Number 51	82.41%
School Number 52	82.22%
School Number 53	81.82%
School Number 54	81.67%
School Number 55	81.59%
School Number 56	81.02%
School Number 57	79.76%
School Number 58	79.46%
School Number 59	78.75%
School Number 60	78.11%
School Number 61	78.05%
School Number 62	77.78%
School Number 63	77.59%
School Number 64	76.47%
School Number 65	76.03%
School Number 66	75.08%
School Number 67	75.00%
School Number 68	74.63%
School Number 69	73.76%
School Number 70	73.76%
School Number 71	73.68%
School Number 72	73.52%
School Number 73	70.87%
School Number 74	70.52%
School Number 75	70.51%
School Number 76	70.49%
School Number 77	70.08%
School Number 78	68.18%
School Number 79	66.45%
School Number 80	65.85%